



North Central Idaho News

CLEARWATER, IDAHO, LATAH, LEWIS & NEZ PERCE COUNTIES

AREA DEVELOPMENTS

IDAHO & LEWIS COUNTIES

- After nearly two years of negotiation, the Nez Perce Tribe and Clearwater National Forest have reached an agreement on management of North Lochsa Face in the Clearwater National Forest. Officials from the Clearwater agreed to prioritize critical restoration needs and use stewardship contracting on the four projects in the analysis area. The 128,000 acre area stretches from Lowell to Fish Creek along U.S. Highway 12 and north to the Lolo Motorway. The area lies within the treaty-protected ceded territory of the Nez Perce Tribe.

Stewardship contracting allows the U.S. Forest Service to exchange goods such as timber for services like decommissioning problem roads and removing barriers to fish passage. Restoration work is bundled into the contract which helps assure the value of restoration will equal the value of timber removed. According to Samuel Penney, Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee Chairman, "One of the primary goals of the Nez Perce Tribe was to obtain assurances from the forest service that restoration work would be completed, and stewardship contracting gives us that certainty."

- National Guard troops were called in to help fight wildfires that threatened several communities in Idaho County in early August after Idaho Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter signed an expanded emergency declaration. The Guard helped on the Poe Cabin Fire six miles southwest of White Bird that burned more than 60,000 acres and threatened the Dixie and Elk City areas because of

North Central Idaho Table 1: Lewiston MSA Labor Force & Employment
Nez Perce County, Idaho and Asotin County, Washington

	Jul 2007*	Jun 2007	Jul 2006	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	30,040	29,800	29,260	0.8	2.7
Unemployment	1,040	1,000	1,230	4.0	-15.4
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.5	3.4	4.2		
Total Employment	29,000	28,800	28,030	0.7	3.5
<i>Unadjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	29,850	29,730	28,940	0.4	3.1
Unemployment	910	920	1,150	-1.1	-20.9
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.0	3.1	4.0		
Total Employment	28,940	28,810	27,790	0.5	4.1
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS	27,670	27,910	27,500	-0.9	0.6
<i>Goods-Producing Industries</i>	<i>4,990</i>	<i>4,890</i>	<i>5,040</i>	<i>2.0</i>	<i>-1.0</i>
Natural Resources & Mining	210	200	220	5.0	-4.5
Construction	1,670	1,630	1,670	2.5	0.0
Manufacturing	3,110	3,060	3,150	1.6	-1.3
Wood Product Manufacturing	560	560	560	0.0	0.0
Paper Manufacturing	1,100	1,100	1,130	0.0	-2.6
Other Manufacturing	1,450	1,400	1,460	3.6	-0.7
<i>Service-Providing Industries</i>	<i>22,680</i>	<i>23,020</i>	<i>22,460</i>	<i>-1.5</i>	<i>1.0</i>
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	5,520	5,480	5,380	0.7	2.6
Wholesale Trade	660	660	670	0.0	-1.5
Retail Trade	3,600	3,570	3,500	0.8	2.9
Utilities	90	90	90	0.0	-0.3
Transportation & Warehousing	1,170	1,160	1,120	0.9	4.5
Information	410	420	420	-2.4	-2.4
Financial Activities	2,100	2,110	2,000	-0.5	5.0
Professional & Business Services	1,650	1,640	1,610	0.6	2.5
Education & Health Services	4,510	4,500	4,430	0.2	1.8
Leisure & Hospitality	2,650	2,630	2,560	0.8	3.5
Other Services	1,180	1,180	1,140	0.0	3.5
Government Education	2,290	2,490	2,220	-8.0	3.2
Government Administration	1,600	1,810	2,000	-11.6	-20.0
Government Tribes	770	760	700	1.3	10.0

*Preliminary Estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

heavy fuel loads and diseased and dying timber. The Guard also helped on the 21,000-acre Rattlesnake Fire located in the Indian Creek and Crooked Creek drainages and on the north bank of the Salmon River. Interagency fire management officials said that the Guard provided important resources in firefighting.

LATAH COUNTY

- Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories in Pullman, Wash., has completed building a 100,000-square-foot addition. The \$10 million expansion doubles production space to nearly 5 acres. The company has added 60 jobs in manufacturing since January, will hire another 50 people before the end of the year and has an additional 50 professional positions open. Schweitzer has averaged 100 new jobs annually or more for the last decade, a feat that equates to adding one company per year to the region, says Edmund O. Schweitzer, the company founder. Employees make relays, the product that started the company, but they also manufacture an increasing variety of other items for electrical transmission such as meters, modems and equipment that receives and transmits data. "The factory is an all-purpose tool," Schweitzer says. "Whatever the sales and marketing guys come up with tomorrow, the plant is ready to build." Schweitzer has remained loyal to Pullman where he founded the company in spite of challenges such as its one-hour distance from the nearest interstate and a housing shortage that Schweitzer says has eased in the last year. "We have a great work force here," Schweitzer says. "We have great vendors from throughout the region. There's great cooperation among our divisions when we're developing and introducing new high-tech solutions."
- The return of Washington State University and the University of Idaho students each fall provides a huge boost to the local economy. Fall classes at both institutes started Aug. 20, and business owners have been gearing up for the yearly onslaught of customers that relieves low summer sales. "This town runs on the schedule of the universities, and it swells and falls by when they're here and when they're not," said Jan Bloom, owner of Cafe Moro in Pullman. Safari Pearl and Eclectica in Moscow also await the return of students as a pick-up from summer slumps, said co-owner Tabitha Simmons. Summers aren't as bad as they were in the past because more students are sticking around, but the influx is a huge effect for everybody, according to Simmons. Chain stores like Wal-Mart also see their business rise and fall depending on the students, said Moscow store manager Rick Sirk. Business starts to pick up at the end of July and really gets going when sorority and fraternity rushes start, he said. Wal-Mart hired additional employees and brought in student-specific items like desks and dorm room

decor. Students also are vital to the restaurant trade, said John Harvey, owner of Denny's in Pullman, Wash. Denny's hires up to 35 new part-time employees for the fall rush. The first weekend of school has always been the time for businesses to make a good impression on students and their parents, he said. "What I like about here is there are about 5,000 new people every year that you have a new opportunity to capture," he said. "If we do things right this fall, we can maybe keep these people for four years."

NEZ PERCE COUNTY & ASOTIN, WASH., COUNTIES

- After a year into the opening of its permanent building east of Lewiston, the Clearwater River Casino & Resort will put the original 12,000-square-foot tent-like building to good use with concerts and other events. Nez Perce Tribal Enterprises Executive Officer Yvonne Oberly said the opening of the new casino and hotel has allowed the building to serve as a permanent tribal event center. The event center is once again bringing in musical acts and is one of many regional casinos to play host to boxing and concerts. During September tribal enterprise officials expect to host a different event each week to celebrate the one year anniversary of the new casino.
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture allowed ranchers affected by fire and drought in Idaho and Nez Perce counties to use conservation reserve land for grazing and haying. Other counties approved for the emergency use of such lands, which are normally set aside for wildlife habitat and erosion control, include Adams, Bingham, Bonneville, Cassia, Elmore, Franklin, Jerome, Lincoln, Oneida, Owyhee, Twin Falls and Washington. Idaho's congressional delegation asked for the emergency grazing and haying declaration.
- Stage 2 fire restrictions went into effect in August in the Nez Perce and Clearwater national forests, land managed by the Idaho Department of Lands and land patrolled by the Clearwater-Potlatch Timber Protection Association, but reverted to Stage 1 restrictions effective Aug. 31. Stage 2 restrictions require activities that include blasting, welding or open flames to be patrolled for at least one hour after the activity has stopped. Operating motor vehicles off designated trails or roads is not allowed.
- The design-build team of ZGA Architects and McAlvain Construction were awarded the contract to build Lewis-Clark State College's new nursing and

health science building. The Legislature appropriated \$37 million earlier this year for nursing buildings at Lewis-Clark and the College of Southern Idaho in Twin Falls. Lewis-Clark's share is \$16.1 million. The building should open in time for the 2009 fall semester. The ZGA/McAlvain team gained an edge due to its recent successful completion of a similar nursing building at Eastern Idaho Technical College in Idaho Falls.

- Idaho Tote in Lewiston has been open for a year but recently moved to Frontage Road in North Lewiston. The company sells a patented tote with a special steering axel that backs up as easily as it moves forward with no swinging or jack-knifing. The tote is a platform positioned off the end of a vehicle that supports its own weight on the steering axle. The company debuted its product in January at one of the world's largest RV conventions in Arizona. Five were sold on the spot and several more sales later resulted from the show. Idaho tote has sold 24 totes at nearly \$6,000 each in the past 10 months.
- A Spanish company is moving forward on its plan to build a 30 million gallon biodiesel plant at the Port of Lewiston. The company chose the port because of its proximity to three top biodiesel researchers at the University of Idaho. Jon Van GERPAN, head of the biological and agricultural engineering department, has been described as the Michael Jordan of biodiesel research by his Spanish counterparts. Faculty member Matt Morra specializes in bio pesticides, bio fertilizers and other products made from the leftovers of the process and Jack Brown, another faculty member, is a plant geneticist. Work at UI provided the basis for the patented process the company uses, which was developed at the University of Cordova in Spain. The company has researched the area to ensure the plant would have an adequate supply of agricultural products, customers to buy biodiesel, transportation systems to ship raw materials and take the product to markets, and methods of using the leftovers created from the process. According to officials most of these issues have been solved.

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ATTENTION FARMERS!

AVOID LIABILITY

Hire Licensed Contractors

State and federal laws require most farm labor contractors to:

- Register with the state;
- Pay workers at the wages they were promised but never less than \$5.85 an hour as of July 24, 2007;
- Provide written statements of earnings and hours worked;
- Provide worker's compensation coverage;
- Transport employees in vehicles that are properly insured, meet federal and state safety standards and operated by licensed drivers;
- Provide access to sanitary drinking water, bathrooms and facilities for washing hands;
- Make sure any housing that is provided meets federal and state safety and health standards.



Photo courtesy of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service

For a list of licensed farm labor contractors, contact Idaho Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division at 1 (800) 843-3193 or visit us on the Web at labor.idaho.gov/wh

IDAHO
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Wage and Hour Division
317 W. Main St., Boise, ID 83735
Craig Soelberg,
Wage and Hour Supervisor